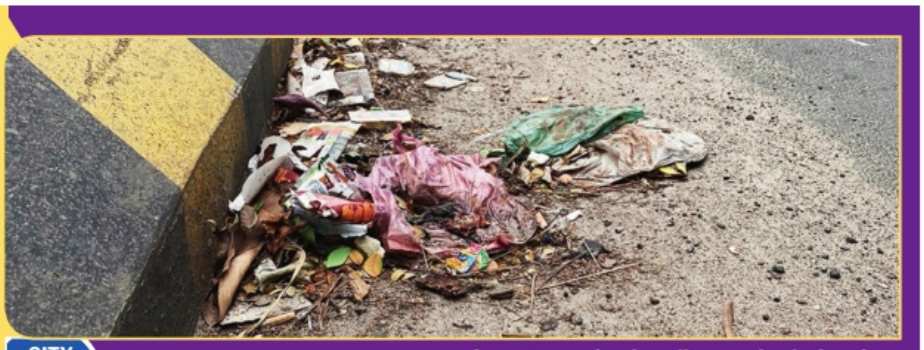
BENGALURU, MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2025 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

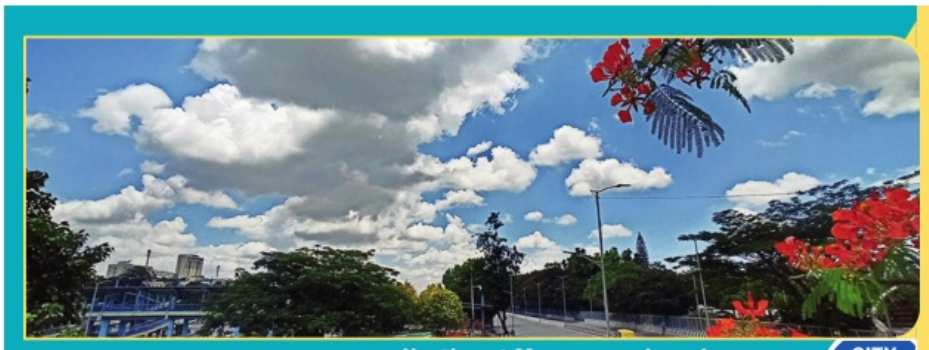
# Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 30 | Min 22 | Humidity 49% Fog/mist in the morning and mainly clear sky later Sensex 76,190 | Nifty 23,092 | Gold 82,420 | Silver 97,500 | Dollar 86.20 | Euro 90.73 | GBP 107.08



CITY PAGE 3

**Flyover flawed** It was touted to be milestone in city's urban infra development, but today double-decker flyover lies ignored and swathed in trash



**Weather turns** Northeast Monsoon ends and temperatures in city soaring to 30°C during day, dropping to 15°C at night

CITY PAGE 5

## Lack of open spaces has blocked BMRCL's compensatory plantation plans: While it had to plant 61,010 saplings in lieu of trees felled between 2021 & 2022, it has been able to meet just 38% of that target

# Tree for a tree would make whole city green

### Experts say purpose is defeated if plantation is done 45 km away from where trees were axed

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Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) which had felled thousands of trees between March 2021 and December 2022 in various parts of the city for construction of metro lines, is yet to meet compensatory plantation norms.

According to BMRCL's recent quarterly report (April to June 2024), the agency had to plant 61,010 saplings in lieu of trees felled in the given period. However, only 23,280 plantations have been completed. Nearly 62% of the required compensatory plantation is still not done.

The report says plantation work and geo-tagging are still in progress.

The process has not been completed in the case of 1,026 trees that were axed in February 2022 between Kodibeesenahalli and KR Puram, 229 trees that were removed in February 2022 from Central Silk Board to Kodibeesenaghalli stretch, 126 trees felled in December 2022 from Central Silk Board to Kodibeesenaghalli, nearly 1.5K trees removed in April 2022 from Kasturinagar to Kempapura, 411 trees axed in September 2022 from Kempapaura to Baglur cross, and 487 trees cut in December 2022 from Kempapura to Shettigere.

"These trees were felled more than two years ago. Compensatory plantation should have been

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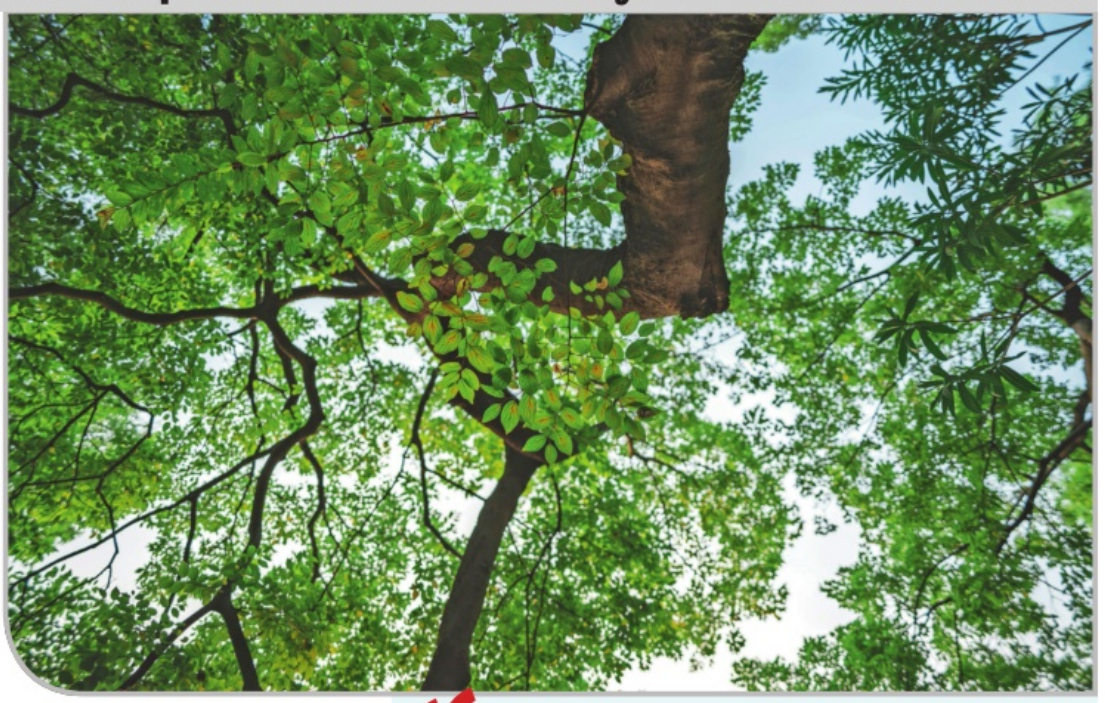

> **"To plant 20,000 saplings, we require more than 200 acres of open space. Due to the rapid urbanisation of the city, getting such land parcels within BBMP limits is getting increasingly difficult** —Yathish Ullal, BMRCL

# KNOWN DEVIL

### Data reveals half of reported rapes perpetrated by those in women's personal circle

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In a concerning revelation, Bengaluru reported two rape cases last week, highlighting the persistent threat to women's safety in the city. Adding to this is the grim statistics -- this month alone, has seen multiple cases of sexual assault, including the rape and murder of a 28-year-old Bangladeshi woman. Investigations have revealed that the victim knew the accused, who is currently absconding. Efforts are underway to apprehend him.

According to official data, Bengaluru has recorded 742 rape cases in 2024 so far. Alarmingly, 364 of these cases were committed by individuals known to the victims. This means that nearly half of the reported incidents involved acquaintances, friends, or even family members, shattering the perception of safety within personal circles. These figures translate to an average of two or more cases being reported daily.

**Recent case**

A 28-year-old domestic worker from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

## THINGS TO DO

### 01 Creative lens

Explore "Kaleidoscope," an exhibition by Sumesh Senan showcasing captivating photography that captures unique perspectives. With nearly two decades of experience, Sumesh, the creative force behind Clicksmiths Media, brings his artistic vision to life through a collection of stunning images. Don't miss this visual journey. **Where: Alliance Francaise; When: January 18 to February 5**

### 02 Poetry night

Join an evening of soulful poetry with Sikata Sitiratna at Urban Solace. Enjoy heartfelt performances from a lawyer-poet who blends art, music, and life's moments into powerful verses. Experience India's longest-running poetry event in a unique cultural setting. **Where: Urban Solace; When: January 28, 7:30 pm**

### 03 Timeless music

Celebrate Tarangini Arts Foundation's Golden Jubilee with Meera Tarangini, a soulful musical event featuring a 50-member ensemble. Experience timeless Meera bhajans brought to life by renowned artists like Suma Sudhindran, Anooru Ananthakrishna, BC Manjunath, and more **Where: Chowdiah Memorial Hall; When: February 2, 6:00 pm**

### 04 Marital dilemma

Don't miss "I Wasn't Born Confused," a humorous play exploring modern youth's dilemmas about marriage. Written by Nikhil and Rashmi Gupta, and directed by Mihir Deshpande, it humorously portrays societal pressures and personal conflicts surrounding relationships. Get your tickets now for a thought-provoking 90-minute experience. **Where: Jagriti Theatre; When: January 31 & February 1, 3:30 pm & 7:30 pm**

### 05 Dance homage

Join Acharya Raksha Karthik and her disciples for a captivating dance tribute to Saint Thyagaraja, celebrating his life and devotion through mesmerising performances. Experience the spiritual journey of the legendary composer brought to life through dance. **Where: Prasanna Ganapathy Temple, Koramangala; When: February 19, 5:00 pm**

# Phase 3 metro projects in B'luru set to finish by 2029

## In Republic Day speech, governor makes announcements on plans for city; boost to Metro service and other infra developments coming up

The phase three Metro projects including corridors one and two may be completed by December 2029. Governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot, during his Republic Day address at the Field Marshal Manekshaw Parade Ground, announced that Phase 3 Metro projects in Bengaluru are expected to be completed by December 2029. He shared details about Phase-2A, a 19.75 km stretch from Central Silk Board to Krishnarajapura, and Phase-2B, a 38.44 km stretch from Krishnarajapura to Kempegowda International Airport, which is currently under progress with an estimated cost of ₹14,788 crore. Phase-3 Corridor-1, stretching 32.15 km from Kempapura to JP Nagar 4th Phase, and Corridor-2, a 12.50 km stretch from Hosahalli to Kadabagere, are set to be completed at a cost of ₹15,611 crore.

Republic Day celebrations at Manekshaw Parade Ground

KAUSHIK JN

### Infrastructure updates

The governor said that the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) aims to allocate 30,000 housing units across 34 locations. Currently, 10,615 flats have been completed out of 14,909 under construction in 25 projects. Planning work for Dr K Shivarama Karanth Layout is progressing rapidly, and plot allotment will begin soon.

### Simplified mineral rules

"The Karnataka Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1994, have been revised to simplify granting mining leases for stone quarrying to SC/ST individuals and organisations. Regulations for sand and M-sand have also been eased for accessibility at fair prices. The Integrated Lease Management System (ILMS) software was successfully upgraded in December 2024 to streamline mineral administration," the Governor added.

### Global capability centres and startups

He said that Bengaluru continues to solidify its position as a global tech hub, housing over 875 Global Capability Centres (GCCs), which account for more than 30% of India's GCCs. To build on this foundation, the Karnataka Government introduced the Karnataka Global Capability Centre Policy 2024-29.

### Safety measures under Nirbhaya Fund

"Public service vehicles in Karnataka, including school buses and taxis, are being equipped with Vehicle Location Tracking Devices and Emergency Panic Buttons as part of the Nirbhaya Fund initiative. So far, 40,848 out of 6,04,863 public service vehicles have been equipped, with plans to expand installation further," he added.

### Traffic management and anti-drug initiatives

Gehlot said that to combat Bengaluru's traffic congestion, the Bengaluru Traffic Police has adopted ASTRAM (Actionable Intelligence for Sustainable Traffic Management), an AI-based platform to monitor and control traffic in real-time. This system prioritises emergency vehicles at signals. Additionally, 2,519 students in Bengaluru have been appointed as Police Marshals, and officers are conducting awareness programs in schools and colleges against drug abuse.

### Cybercrime and public awareness

Governor Gehlot highlighted the growing concern of cybercrime, which now accounts for 10% of all reported crimes in the State. The government is focused on providing advanced technology and training to tackle this menace while raising public awareness to prevent cyber threats.

— BMB

# Republic Day walk bridges B'luru's history and footpath needs

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As part of reclaiming footpaths, the citizens came together on Republic Day as a celebration where over 40 citizens gathered at Vidhana Soudha at 6 am to participate in a 26km Footpath Walk. Organised by BangaloreWALKS as part of the year-long Bengaluru Walk Festival (BlrWalkFest), the walk aimed to reclaim the city's footpaths and promote their use.

The walk stretched from Jayanagar in the south to Yeshwantpur in the north, covering key landmarks like Vidhana Soudha, Raj Bhavan, Bangalore Palace, Indian Army offices, Constitution Circle, Mahatma Gandhi Statue, and sites tied to India's Independence movement. The theme revolved around Republic Day and the significant events leading to January 26, 1950.

Arun Pai, the walk leader and curator said, "It is overwhelming to see so many citizens come together to walk for 11 hours, from sunrise to sunset. We've completed 17 walks since December 1, covering 132km of interconnected footpaths. Today's 26km walk is likely the longest footpath walk ever organised in any city."

Participants learned about India's and Karnataka's history during the walk, with Arun providing insights into the transfer of power from the Mysore Wodeyars to Karnataka's first Chief Minister, KC Reddy, and the role of Field Marshal Cariappa in the 1948 war. He also highlighted the Mysore Kingdom's connection to the Indian flag and how public sector units contributed to Bengaluru's growth after Republic Day.

The walk spanned from Jayanagar to Yeshwantpur, covering landmarks like Vidhana Soudha, Raj Bhavan, Bangalore Palace

Aakarsh Darla, one of the walkers, shared his experience and said, "It was a refreshing Republic Day walk with a lovely Bengaluru crowd. We explored both the old and the new parts of the city on a beautifully curated route," he said.

The walk wasn't just about history—it also highlighted the need for reclaiming footpaths in a city often plagued by traffic and poor pedestrian infrastructure. Arun said, "This walk shows how footpaths can connect people, places, and stories. We hope it inspires more citizens and authorities to prioritise safe, walkable spaces."

The Bengaluru Walk Festival is set to continue throughout the year, offering residents more opportunities to explore the city while emphasising the importance of walkable infrastructure. Many people participating even give ratings for the footpath and the rating would be collated and submitted to BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) to improve the infrastructure.

# Raids reveal tip of 'illegal immigration iceberg'

## 4 arrested in HSR Layout, but authorities believe many continue to stay on in city using forged papers, some subjected to trafficking or get involved in crime

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In a coordinated operation on Friday, the Central Crime Branch (CCB), along with a city-based NGO, carried out raids in HSR Layout and Sarjapur areas. The raids led to the arrest of four Bangladeshi nationals, who have now been sent to detention camps and will be further deported to their homes, as per officials.

The arrested individuals include three women employed as masseuses in local spas and one man working as a driver for cab services, as well as a delivery agent for a food app, who had been living illegally in the city for periods ranging from four to twelve years. The investigation also uncovered evidence of forged Indian documents, including Aadhaar cards and voter IDs, as well as signs of drug abuse and lavish lifestyles.

File photo of a fake Aadhaar, PAN, driving licence card racket bust in city

> "This influx raises concerns about a rise in crime rates. We must ensure they are not subjected to trafficking or involved in crimes
> –Chandragupta, Additional CP

### Illegal immigration worries

Authorities believe the arrests are just the tip of the iceberg, as an estimated over 1.2 lakh Bangladeshi nationals are said to be residing in Bengaluru, many with forged documents. These individuals often work in private firms, as domestic helps, or as garbage collectors for the BBMP.

Contrary to the belief that poverty is the main driver of illegal immigration, many arrested individuals have cited escaping societal constraints in Bangladesh as their primary reason for migrating to India. According to NGO sources advocating for immigrant rights, a significant number of Bangladeshi nationals come to India seeking better job opportunities, higher earnings, and improved living conditions. These NGOs estimate that approximately 3 lakh such immigrants reside in the city, many of whom remain unregistered.

Law enforcement agencies face significant challenges in addressing this issue, as it poses a serious threat to national security and law and order. The process of verifying their nationality is complex, with enforcement agencies and NGOs often relying on Bangladesh authorities for cross-verification, which is not always reliable. Even when deported, many illegal immigrants return within months by bribing officials or exploiting porous borders.

Hence, in this case, although provisions exist to charge them under the Immoral Trafficking Act (IT Act), no case was registered. This is because such cases, once filed, often take up to three years to resolve in court. During this time, the accused, if released on bail, continue their activities and gain the right to stay in the country until the case is resolved, preventing their return to their homeland. Instead, they were arrested and sent to detention camps, from where they will be deported.

Dr. Chandragupta, Addl. Commissioner of Police (Crime), stated that their concern is that these immigrants should not be subjected to trafficking and other related issues. "This influx of people raises concerns about an increase in crime rates. We must ensure they are not subjected to trafficking, drawn into immoral activities, or involved in crimes. Our priority is to prevent such issues from occurring," he said.

### Recurring problem

This is not the first instance of such arrests. In December 2024, Bengaluru police detained 93 illegal Bangladeshi migrants during a broader crackdown on unauthorised residents. In April 2024, four Bangladeshi nationals were arrested on the city's outskirts for residing illegally and using forged documents.

# Double decker flyover turns trash point

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Bengaluru's first double-decker flyover, hailed as a major milestone in the city's urban infrastructure development, is now under fire for the heaps of trash that line its roads and the potholes that dot its surface.

Commuters using the flyover on a daily basis have raised concerns about the lack of maintenance and the risks these issues pose to their safety. While the flyover was expected to ease traffic congestion and enhance the city's image, it is now causing inconvenience due to poor upkeep.

"It's incredibly disappointing to see how dirty and neglected the flyover has become. It was supposed to be a symbol of progress for Bengaluru, but all I see are piles of garbage and potholes that make the drive stressful. What was the point of building this massive structure if we can't even maintain it properly? The accumulated trash on the road sides is not only an eyesore but also a health hazard," said Anjali Kumar, a regular user.

Raghav, another regular user of the flyover, said the potholes are dangerous, especially during rainy days. "I've seen several close calls, and I'm worried someone will end up getting hurt. Why should we have to risk our lives just to use a flyover that was meant to make our commute smoother?" he asked, pointing out the visible cracks and damage to the road surface.

KAUSHIK JN

Trash accumulates by the side on double-decker flyover

Local residents also voiced their disappointment over the government's failure to maintain such a critical project. "The flyover is a great idea, but if the city can't take care of it, then what's the use?" There's garbage everywhere, and it's not even being cleared on time. This only adds to the already polluted surroundings. We need better maintenance to ensure that the flyover serves its purpose. The state of Bengaluru's first double-decker flyover has left commuters wondering whether the government will prioritise cleanliness and repairs or continue to ignore the pressing maintenance issues," said Mohammed Shariff, a regular user.

# Proceedings against deceased I-T assessee can't go on: HC

The Karnataka High Court determined that Income Tax proceedings initiated posthumously against an Assessee cannot proceed against their legal representatives.

This decision emerged from the dismissal of an Income Tax Officer's appeal challenging a single-judge bench verdict. The earlier ruling had favoured the deceased Assessee's legal representative and nullified the demand notice, penalty notice and associated proceedings for tax collection.

Justices Krishna S Dixit and G Basavaraja, forming the division bench, clarified, "Had the proceedings been initiated against the Assessee during his lifetime, they could have continued against the legal representatives of the deceased Assessee." The case saw Advocate YV Raviraj representing the Appellants whilst Advocate Sandeep Huilgol appeared for the respondents.

The Revenue's counsel cited Section 159(2)(a), (b), and (c) of the Income Tax Act to support continuing proceedings against the legal representative.

The Court rejected this interpretation, explaining that these provisions only allow continuation of proceedings that began during the Assessee's lifetime. The bench emphasised that the law neither permits initiating proceedings against deceased Assessees nor enforcing subsequent orders against their legal representatives. The Court observed, "If the Parliament intended that, a proceeding of the kind can be initiated against the Assessee posthumously and orders passed therein should bind his Legal Representatives, the language of the provision would have been much different."

The bench dismissed the Revenue's request to initiate fresh proceedings against legal representatives after setting aside original proceedings. They stated, "This contention is structured on a premise that the Legal Representatives i.e., persons who hold estate of the deceased Assessee in their hands are under a legal obligation to inform the Revenue as to the death of the Assessee. To support such a premise, no provision of law in general and no section of 1961 Act in particular are brought to our notice."

The Court concluded, "If the statutorily prescribed time limit has expired as against the deceased himself, as has happened in this case then no proceedings can be taken against his LRs."

The appeal's dismissal upheld the single-judge bench's original decision favouring the legal representative.

– Rachana Rames

# Kaikondrahalli Bus Stop: An unsafe wait for commuters

**Kaikondrahalli bus stop is unsafe and poorly maintained, with passengers often waiting on road; locals urge for improved, well-designed shelters to ensure safer and more comfortable public transport**

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Commuters relying on the Kaikondrahalli bus stop are facing significant challenges due to its poor condition. The rusted and dilapidated structure offers no space for people to sit or wait comfortably, forcing many to stand on the road while waiting for buses.

Shilpi Sahu, an avid cyclist and concerned citizen, highlighted the issue on social media, drawing attention to the state of the bus stop. "This bus shelter is useless for all practical purposes. Most other bus shelters in this part of the town are either non-existent or in terrible condition. Better to not have such shelters than to have these eyesores. We need to ask why we are not investing in people-friendly designs," she said.

The Kaikondrahalli bus stop is not alone in its state of neglect. Many other bus shelters along the ORR (Outer Ring Road) are in similar disrepair, despite being frequented by a significant number of commuters.Local commuters shared their struggles, expressing frustration over the lack of basic amenities. "The bus stop is in such bad shape that standing under it is unsafe. Most of us end up waiting on the road," said a frequent user.

Well-designed bus shelters are essential for an efficient public transport system. They provide protection from the elements, seating for elderly and differently-abled passengers, and a safe space for commuters to wait. Poorly maintained bus stops discourage the use of public transport and force people onto the roads, creating traffic hazards.

Another commuter pointed out the inconvenience of standing for

> **"There is no seating available, and with shelter barely offering any protection from the sun or rain, waiting here becomes a real ordeal**– Commuter

long periods, especially for elderly passengers. "The situation at Kaikondrahalli highlights the urgent need for investment in well-maintained and thoughtfully designed bus shelters. Improved public transport infrastructure can encourage more people to use buses, reduce congestion, and make urban travel more sustainable and commuter-friendly. There is no seating available, and with the shelter barely offering any protection from the sun or rain, waiting here becomes a real ordeal."

Kaikondrahalli bus stop is not the only one in disrepair, many other bus shelters along ORR also suffer neglect

Women commuters, who benefit from the free bus travel initiative, also emphasised the importance of better infrastructure. "It's great that we have free travel, but what about the bus stops? Without proper shelters and adequate seating, the whole experience becomes frustrating and unsafe. It's not just about offering free travel; we need basic facilities like clean shelters to make commuting comfortable and accessible for everyone," a commuter added.

# Comedy, drama, and philosophy wrap up UNMASK Theatre Fest

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The UNMASK Theatre Fest wrapped up on a high note at St John's Auditorium, leaving the audience thoroughly entertained and inspired. The festival's day- 3 featured a comedy-drama, The Scent of a Man, starring Ashwin Mushran and Suchitra Pillai as a hilariously chaotic married couple. This witty and thought-provoking play took the audience through the complexities of love, marriage, and infidelity, offering an afternoon filled with humour, sharp dialogue, and surprises.

The play revolves around two married couples: Nikhil (played by Ashwin Mushran), a successful advertising executive, and his intelligent yet neurotic wife, Mallika (portrayed by Suchitra Pillai) and Ananya, a Tupperware saleswoman, and her husband, Partho, a teacher. The story takes a comedic turn when Nikhil, unknowingly reconnecting with an old flame, invites Ananya and Partho over for dinner. The plot thickens when Mallika, who had earlier met Ananya as her Tupperware salesperson, instantly recognises her. The ensuing dinner party becomes a comedy of errors as the characters' secrets begin to unravel, revealing surprising connections and affairs.

In a twist, it is revealed that Mallika and Partho are having an affair of their own, turning the evening into a chaotic web of lies and betrayal. Throughout, Nikhil, who is under constant suspicion from Mallika regarding his fidelity, remains loyal until the final moment when a shocking twist reveals his indiscretion. The rapid-fire humour, clever one-liners, and impeccable timing of the actors kept the audience in fits of laughter, with the play delivering punchlines at just the right moments.

Reflecting on the Bengaluru audience's response, Suchitra Pillai shared, "The one thing about Bengaluru is that people get the jokes. Performing here was amazing, and we look forward to returning with more shows." The performances were met with raucous applause, and the audience's engagement added to the vibrancy of the night.

## Piyakkad: A poetic dive into drinking

Meanwhile, the solo act Piyakkad also featured in the fest, brought an entirely different yet equally captivating experience. Performed by Makarand Deshpande, Piyakkad was a hilariously philosophical exploration of the act of drinking, with Deshpande breaking the fourth wall in a style that only he can master. The play presented a reflective dive into the world of piyakkads (a term for those who indulge in heavy drinking), sidestepping any moral judgment and instead highlighting the complexity of human nature through storytelling.

Deshpande's witty observations, philosophical musings, and humorous tales of two piyakkads in his life challenged societal stereotypes around drinking while blending social commentary with deep emotional insight. His storytelling, coupled with light-hearted humour, provided the audience with a poetic yet comical perspective on the topic.

The festival concluded with a warm and positive reception, with audiences praising the incredible performances and the diverse range of shows. From riveting drama to thought-provoking solo acts, UNMASK offered a unique blend of dance, humour, and high-energy performances. The fest's success was evident as the crowd cheered, laughed, and left with a sense of fulfilment and excitement. The performances, full of life and energy, not only entertained but also sparked reflection, leaving everyone eager for the next UNMASK festival.

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## Roads dug

**Basavanagudi**

Dug-up roads in NR Colony, Basavanagudi, have caused poor conditions for four months, stopping buses near Netkallappa Circle.

## Parking chaos

**Kaval Byrasandra**

Cars awaiting repairs are parked along Ambedkar Medical College Main Road in Kaval Byrasandra, blocking the pavement and road, with no action from the Traffic Police.

## Repair delayed

**Virupakshapura**

A month-long delay in fixing a manhole on Virupakshapura Main Road, 3rd Cross, is causing trouble for residents and commuters.

# Call for 'merit-based, transparent' Vice-Chancellor appointment

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Education activists urge the state government to appoint a qualified candidate as Vice Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) without yielding to political or religious pressures.

Education activists request authorities to avoid considering candidates with questionable records for the Vice Chancellor position at RGUHS, emphasising the importance of the role for medical students. The position will become vacant in February, with over 20 candidates having applied. There are concerns that the selection process may be influenced by corruption and nepotism.

In December 2012, Prof. UB Ashok Kumar, Head of the Department of Sociology at Maharaja's Evening College, left a death note expressing dissatisfaction with the system. The note, addressed to the President of India, highlighted concerns about the significant amounts of money spent by aspirants seeking vice-chancellor positions.

Educationist Veena Mohan urges authorities to choose a qualified candidate for the RGUHS Vice Chancellor position, without yielding to external pressures. "I came across rumours about money spent to get selected for the post of the Vice Chancellor. I urge the authorities to keep students' welfare in mind while selecting the candidate for the VC post," Veena said.

In November 2017, the shortlisting of University of Mysore professor C Basavaraju for the position of Vice Chancellor at Karnataka State Law University by a search committee faced criticism from activists. Student leader Lokesh Ram has called on authorities to adhere to proper norms

when selecting a candidate for the RGUHS Vice Chancellor position, urging the Governor or Chief Minister not to bow to political pressures in the selection process."I urge the authorities to select a candidate who prioritises students' welfare over yielding to the influence of the medical seat and contractor mafias," said Lokesh Ram.

Niranjan Aradhya VP, National Convener of the People's Alliance for Fundamental Right to Education, stated that while there is nothing wrong with multiple candidates applying for the VC position, the government-constituted search committee will select only three candidates from those who have applied. "The government has to select the right candidate for the VC post in the interest of students' welfare," Niranjan Aradhya said.

Meanwhile, the Citizen Rights Foundation (CRF), a vocal advocate for transparency and accountability, has written a letter to the Chief Minister, urging him to ensure a corruption-free and transparent process in appointing the Vice Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS).

CRF Chairman KA Paul, in the letter, dated January 23, has emphasised the urgency of decisive intervention to restore the institution's integrity. The letter highlighted a series of alarming allegations surrounding RGUHS, including recruitment irregularities, financial mismanagement, and malpractice in admissions. These systemic issues, reportedly persisting since early 2024, have tarnished the university's reputation and undermined public trust in its ability to deliver quality education.

The foundation stresses that RGUHS, the cornerstone of healthcare education in Karnataka, requires ethical leadership to navigate these challenges. The letter urged stringent qualifications for the ideal candidate, including proven integrity, strong leadership, crisis management skills, and a vision for academic excellence.

The letter underscores the need for transparent governance and urges the formation of an independent search committee to oversee the selection process. "We need a Vice-Chancellor who will ensure financial oversight, reform recruitment processes, and prioritise the academic development of students above all else," Paul added.

# Weather turns: Hot days, cool nights, and rain's return

## Bengaluru experiences shift as Northeast Monsoon ends, with temperatures soaring to 30°C during day and dropping to 15°C at night; light rain is expected later this month

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In India, certain dates (approximately) mark significant weather transitions. For instance, around June 1, the Southwest Monsoon begins its journey across the Indian mainland, progressively reaching Bengaluru and other parts of Karnataka between June 5 and 8. Similarly, October 15 signals the withdrawal of the Southwest Monsoon from Bengaluru and other regions, marking the onset of the Northeast Monsoon. This year, January 26 is another noteworthy date, as it signifies the conclusion of the Northeast Monsoon season.

Dr N Puviarasan, a scientist at IMD (Indian Meteorological Department) Bengaluru, explained, "Conditions are becoming favourable for the cessation of Northeast Monsoon rains over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Mahe, and adjoining areas of Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Rayalaseema, and South Interior Karnataka from January 26. The cyclonic circulation over the east Equatorial Indian Ocean and the adjoining south Andaman Sea, which extended up to 3.1 km above mean sea level, has become less marked."

As Bengaluru experiences a transition in weather, the temperature difference between day and night has become more pronounced. During rainy or cloudy days, the gap between daytime and nighttime temperatures was minimal, with nighttime temperatures just a few degrees lower than

On Jan 31 and Feb 1, light to moderate rainfall is expected in parts of K'taka, including Udupi, Hassan

**"Conditions like colds, coughs, and sinusitis often spike during such fluctuations due to weakened immunity and can trigger joint pain** –Dr K Krishnamurthy, physician

daytime highs. However, the current weather pattern shows a stark contrast. For instance, Bengaluru's daytime temperature has now crossed the 30°C mark, while nighttime temperatures have dropped to 15°C, which is 1.2°C below the seasonal average. This creates a stark contrast, with daytime temperatures being nearly double those at night. As a result, Bengalureans are increasingly experiencing a significant disparity between the warmth of the day and the coolness of the night.

Dr N Puviarasan has forecasted clear skies for Bengaluru over the next few days, with fog or mist likely in some areas during the early morning hours. Daytime temperatures are expected to hover around 30°C, while nighttime temperatures may dip to approximately 15°C. However, a shift in weather patterns is anticipated toward the end of the month. "On January 31 and February 1, light to moderate rainfall is likely at isolated locations across several districts in Karnataka, including Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada, Bagalkot, Gadag, Dharwad, Vijayapura, Haveri, Mysuru, Mandya, Hassan, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Tumakuru, Kodagu, Kolar, Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban, Chamarajanagar, and Ramanagara districts," he said.

Dr K Krishnamurthy, a general physician, warned that the sharp fluctuation between day and night temperatures can significantly impact health, especially during this seasonal transition. "When daytime temperatures reach 30°C and nights drop to 15°C, the body struggles to adapt to these drastic changes, making individuals more susceptible to respiratory issues. Conditions like colds, coughs, and sinusitis often spike during such fluctuations due to weakened immunity. Temperature changes can also trigger joint pain in the elderly. I advise proper hydration, wearing weather-appropriate clothing, and ensuring balanced nutrition," he added.

# Traffic diversions for girder launch

A 65-metre composite girder is scheduled to be launched across the Salem Bridge (Railway Crossing) at Doddanekundi near Rainbow Hospital on Monday and Tuesday between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am. A senior police official said, "This operation will take place within the limits of HAL Airport and Mahadevapura Traffic Police Station. To facilitate the girder launch, traffic on one side of the ORR heading towards KR Puram will be blocked, while the opposite side will be converted into a two-way route between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am on both days. The affected area will cover a 200-metre stretch from the Outer Ring Road (Marathahalli side) towards Tinfactory, from Metro Pillar No 434 to Pillar No 435."

As a result of the traffic restrictions, commuters travelling from Marathahalli towards Tinfactory and Hebbal are advised to take a left turn near Marathahalli Bridge, proceed on HAL Airport Road, then turn right at Suranjandas Road Junction to reach NGEF Junction. From there, they should take a right turn towards Tin Factory and Hebbal. Those travelling from Tin Factory towards Marathahalli can take a left turn near KR Puram Railway Station, travel along ITPL Road, and take a right turn at Hoodi Junction to head towards Marathahalli via Kundalahalli.

# Vendor held for assault

Police in Ramamurthy Nagar have arrested a 20-year-old scrap vendor on charges of repeatedly sexually assaulting a 15-year-old ninth-grade student. The suspect allegedly lured the victim into a relationship before committing the assaults.

The accused, Imran, reportedly threatened the girl into submission when she tried to resist. Her irregular school attendance raised concerns among her teachers, who subsequently informed her mother.

When confronted, the victim disclosed the abuse, prompting her father to file a police complaint. The accused has been detained, and further investigations are underway.

# Rowing solo: 'Fear of failure shouldn't stop you from trying'

## Ananya Prasad has undertaken solo rowing across Atlantic Ocean; will become first woman of colour to achieve feat when race is done

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Ananya Prasad began her journey on December 11; the race covers approximately 3,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean

At 34, Ananya Prasad has started a journey of rowing solo across the Atlantic Ocean. This adventure, which began on December 11, is not just a personal challenge but also a mission to inspire others, particularly women, to push boundaries and pursue what may seem impossible.

Ananya, an Economics Graduate from Sheffield University and originally from Bengaluru, first learned about the Atlantic rowing race three years ago. Known as 'The World's Toughest Row', the race covers approximately 3,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean and tests participants' physical and mental endurance. "When I first heard about the race, I thought it was impossible. But then I decided to take up the challenge. I want to show that fear of failure shouldn't stop you from trying to do things," she said.

### Rigorous training

Her journey to the start line was no less challenging than the race itself. Over the last three years, Ananya has undergone rigorous training, learning to row for long hours, navigate the ocean, and prepare for unpredictable conditions.

The challenges she faces daily are immense. Rowing for 12-15 hours a day, she battles physical exhaustion, seasickness, towering 20-metre waves, and strong winds. The solitude of the vast ocean also tests her mental resilience. Recently, she faced a significant setback when the rudder of her boat broke, delaying her journey by two days. "Dealing with unexpected challenges like this has been a crucial part of the experience. The learning curve has been steep, but it's been an incredible adventure," said Prasad.

> "It's not about overcoming mental health challenges; it's about inspiring people, especially women, to take up challenges

She is one of 38 teams participating in the race and one of only six solo rowers. Among these solo participants, she is the only woman and when she completes the race, she will become the first woman of colour to achieve this feat. "Courage is attempting things even when you think you may fail," she said.

### Accomplishment

Prasad's mission goes beyond personal accomplishment. She aims to encourage women to participate in adventure sports and take on challenges that seem insurmountable. "My main aim is to show that you can achieve things that seem impossible. It's not about overcoming mental health challenges; it's about inspiring people, especially women, to take up challenges," she added.

She is also using her journey to raise funds for the Mental Health Foundation, UK, and Deenabandhu Trust in Mysuru. She has garnered support from the general public and corporate sponsors to aid these causes.

As she continues her voyage, she said, "Rowing the Atlantic solo represents the ultimate test of physical and mental fortitude. It's not just about conquering the ocean but about demonstrating the resilience of the human spirit."

Speaking about some of the challenges she added, " Challenges are mainly things like physical exhaustion, seasickness, winds and 20 metre waves, loneliness, Marlin attacks."

# Bank issues rage on

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Thirty-three members of the Mangalore Catholic Cooperative Bank (MCCB) have submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Minister for Cooperation and the Chief Secretary to supersede the MCCB for the alleged irregularities and extortion of borrowers. The MCCB members demanded the Chief Minister take measures to suspend the board of MCCB and appoint an administrator. They said that Manohar Pereira, a borrower from the MCCB was found dead at his house in Peramakki on December 17 and that MCCB Chairman Anil Lobo was responsible for the death.

Anil Lobo told BM that the allegations made in the memorandum are false. "These allegations are made against me by some members of the MCCB with vested interest. These members are not able to digest the MCCB's progress. I assumed office of the MCCB Chairman in 2018. The MCCB turnover was Rs 500 crore. Now, the MCCB's turnover is Rs 1,250 crore and MCCB's operations are being extended from South Canara to entire Karnataka," said Lobo.

On the alleged abetment to suicide of Pereira, the MCCB Chairman said the MCCB staff followed the norms while recovering the loan. "We have already filed defamation cases against those making false allegations against the MCCB Board," he said.

The memorandum demands that the government handover the suicide case of Manohar Pereira to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). "There is rampant corruption at the MCCB. Pereira, the deceased, has made a video, before committing suicide, narrating how MCCB chairman Anil Lobo harassed and cheated him," the memorandum said. Gerard Towers, one of the members of the MCCB, told BM the bank is in a mess. "The MCCB Chairman is involved in chit business. He is known for harassing the MCCB employees and borrowers," said Towers. Anil Lobo was earlier arrested by Mangalore Rural Police for alleged abetment of suicide of Pereira.

# NOTES FROM THE FIELD

### BFFs to frenemies

Last week, the spotlight was on a fiery war of words between two once-inseparable "besties" turned political sparring partners—B Sriramulu and G Janardhana Reddy. Sriramulu fired the opening salvo, accusing his former buddy of complaining to the higher-ups about him following the Sandur by-poll loss. Not one to stay quiet, Reddy hit back with a classic "I made you" moment, claiming he had worked hard to shape Sriramulu's political career. Sriramulu countered this with a press conference, alleging that Reddy was trying to tarnish his image by making him look like a politician with a criminal background. The plot thickened as soon as the press conference wrapped up—Sriramulu was spotted speaking to Union Minister JP Nadda. Sriramulu then spilled the beans: "Nadda ji called me, and I explained everything that happened in the Core Committee. He assured me, saying, 'Ramu, I've got your back. Modi ji and Amit Shah are informed, and we support you. If you're coming to Delhi, let us know.'" With a confident smile, Sriramulu added, "I won't betray their trust. I'll fix a date and head to Delhi soon." And, the political soap opera continues!

### Power sharing or caring?

"There's no power politics happening in the state. No power-sharing or caring here. It's all about focusing on development," said Municipal Administration Minister Byrathi Suresh. In response to AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge's request for no public statements on the CM and KPCC president's positions, Suresh swiftly dismissed any talk of power politics. He told the media, "The CM and Deputy CM are both steering the state towards progress." When asked if the Deputy CM was left out of the equation, he responded, "The CM is important, but so is the Deputy CM. Both hold equal importance." As for power-sharing, Byrathi said, "I have no idea about that."

### Munching chips

Did you come to the meeting to munch on chips? Coming with half-baked information doesn't help, you know! With such officers around, how do you expect the government to function? These are some of the barbs Labour Minister Santosh Lad had for the officers he met during a progress review meeting of the seven districts under the Kalaburagi Revenue Division. "Don't just mumble that you have it but didn't bring it!" he added. When the officer kept mumbling, Lad lost his temper. "Why are you even attending the meeting if you can't come prepared? With officers like you, how is the government supposed to run?" he snapped. He firmly instructed, "Get the full details within a week and give them to me." The minister added, "The way these officers are behaving, it's like they've come straight out of a morning show, afternoon matinee, and evening or night first or second show of a movie. They come unprepared, just like that!"

### Just blabbering

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said, "I haven't met Sriramulu. He hasn't spoken to me, and no invitation was extended to him to join the party. He's simply misusing my name in this matter." Speaking to the media recently, Shivakumar minced no words while addressing Janardhan Reddy's claim that he had approached Sriramulu. "He's just blabbering. He wasn't even in that party earlier, and now he's trying to shake its very foundation. Why should I even mention his name and make him seem important? Will he grow in stature by dropping my name? Has he seen me in touch with anyone? Let's not waste time discussing who he's in touch with. I'm not here to reveal unnecessary details. Yes, before the elections, I did ask Sriramulu to join us. But he declined, saying he would stay in the BJP. I've approached around 50 people like that." When asked what he would do if Sriramulu expressed interest in joining Congress now, he shot back, "Why should I waste my time even thinking about it?"

### Measly prize

Kho-kho players part of the world cup squad have expressed their disappointment. "While other states are rolling out the red carpet with a whopping ₹2.50 crore and job opportunities for the World Cup winners, our beloved Karnataka government has offered a measly ₹5 lakh. And guess what? We're not having it!" exclaimed player B Chaitra. At the Press Club on Saturday, she said, "This paltry sum will leave our young athletes feeling disheartened. If cricket and football can get the royal treatment, kho-kho deserves the same spotlight!" star MK Gautam chimed in, "After Maharashtra, Karnataka is the next big name in kho-kho, bagging several national awards and earning its place of respect. But it seems our own state government hasn't gotten the memo. We proudly reject the ₹5 lakh reward – it's just not enough!" **— Sridhar Vivan**

BM SIMPLY PUT

# Bangalore Palace land dispute

## Today, we explain to you what the controversy is all about

Last week, the State Cabinet decided to issue an ordinance to address the compensation issue for the royal family of Mysore regarding the acquisition of 15.17 acres of land at the Bangalore Palace grounds, which is needed for the road widening project.

### What is the Dispute Over Palace Grounds?

The controversy over the Bangalore Palace grounds has reignited, with the Supreme Court's recent ruling directing the Karnataka government to allocate Transferable Development Rights (TDR) worth ₹3,011 crore for acquiring 15.39 acres of the Palace Grounds for road widening. This move has significant financial implications for the state.

### What's the Background?

The dispute stems from the 1996 Bangalore Palace (Acquisition and Transfer) Act, under which the state government acquired 472.16 acres of Palace Grounds for ₹11 crore. However, the royal family contested this acquisition, leading to years of legal battles, with the Supreme Court maintaining the status quo on the land since 1997.

### Why TDR?

In 2009, the BBMP proposed widening key roads, including Jayamahal Road and Ballari Road. To acquire the necessary land from the Palace Grounds, the government offered Transferable Development Rights (TDR) instead of cash compensation. TDRs allow landowners to sell development rights to developers, enabling higher construction potential in other areas.

### Different Views

**HK Patil, Law Minister**

"If the Supreme Court issues an order in favour of the state in the ongoing appeal regarding the Palace land acquisition, the TDRs cannot be withdrawn. Therefore, the Cabinet has decided to issue an ordinance as a supplement to the 1996 Palace Land Acquisition Act."

**Pramodadevi Wadiyar, Royal Family Member**

"If we face injustice regarding the Palace grounds for the road widening, we will resort to legal battles. We have not caused any trouble to anyone, but we are being targeted. The property being acquired for the road also belongs to us."

### Key Facts at a Glance

**Land Required**
**15.39 acres**

**TDR Value**
**₹3,011 crore**

**Total Palace Grounds Area**
**472.16 acres**

**Initial Compensation in 1996**
**₹11 crore**

### What is TDR?

TDR is a unique compensation model where instead of paying in cash, landowners receive development rights that can be traded. These rights enable developers to increase the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for building more floors, typically in high-rise projects.

### Political Context

The controversy has seen political shifts. In 2019, the JD(S)-Congress coalition government under HD Kumaraswamy authorised the land acquisition for road expansion. However, the BJP-led government under Basavaraj Bommai later scrapped the plan due to high costs.

### What's the Latest Supreme Court Ruling?

In response to ongoing disputes and the need for road expansion, the Supreme Court has recently directed the Karnataka government to grant TDR worth ₹3,011 crore for acquiring 15.39 acres of Palace Grounds to facilitate the widening of Bellary and Jayamahal Roads.

### What Happens Next?

The state's recent Cabinet decision to issue an ordinance is expected to help streamline the process and avoid further delays in the much-needed infrastructure projects. This development could balance the needs of urban expansion while addressing concerns around heritage preservation.

# Derby-day run: Classy Ranquelino lands Derby riches

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In the big showdown at sundown at the Bangalore Turf Club (BTC), the second favourite Ranquelino landed the Derby riches in resplendent style. The winner from leading trainer Darius Byramji's yard was tipped to upset the applecart of the favourite Redefined in the blue riband of the season, the HPSL Bangalore Derby and the top colt did just that, galloping into the Hall Of Fame to the delight of his six owners, who fancied him to emerge champ in the rich event, which offered a handsome purse of Rs 74.8 lakh to the winner.

Leading jockey Sandesh astride the favourite in the mega event was at his best. The top pro settled Ranquelino nice and easy all through the backstretch before he reminded the star performer of the task on hand when the race came on a boil and Ranquelino responding gamley to his master's call produced an astounding gallop to outclass his eight rivals in emphatic fashion. The top favourite Redefined did produce his best, but that was just not good enough to stop the champion from Darius' yard galloping to join the elite Derby winners' club.

"He was travelling really well all through the backstretch and I was confident that he will win, the moment he quickened and assumed command at the top of the straight,"said Sandesh pointing out that the champion colt looked a picture of fitness at the parade ring before walking out to prove that he is in the big classic league.

Proud owners of Ranquelino lift the HPSL Bangalore Derby Trophy, on Sunday

Popular owner Ashok Ranpise, immensely pleased with the success of Ranquelino revealed that all the six owners of the champion have decided to take him to Mumbai to compete in the Mumbai Indian Derby scheduled on the first Sunday of February. "We understand that travel fatigue may pose a problem taking onto account that Ranquelino needs to travel all the way to Mumbai tomorrow and race against the best in the country in less than a week. But we on the strength of this superb performance need to give the champion an opportunity to prove his mettle against the best," said Ashok adding that Sandesh will again guide the fortunes of Ranquelino in Mahalaxmi on February 2.

On the D-day form played true and most fancied contestants nailed bold colours to the mast and this helped the record 15,000 crowd make a quick buck. The top fancy Roman Spirit from Dominic's yard justified his top billing in the principal added attraction, the Stewards Gold Cup and another top public choice Mountain Jewel from the stables of campion trainer Prasanna Kumar to the delight of the railbirds came out tops in the C Narayan Reddy Memorial Million for juveniles.

Ranquelino, jockey Sandesh astride galloping home to land the Derby riches at the BTC on Republic Day

# Following best practices given by tree panel: BMRCL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

completed by BMRCL long ago," said a city-based environmentalist.

## No space available

BMRCL officials say the delay is due to lack of open spaces in city limits. At least one acre of open space is required to accommodate nearly 150 saplings.

In the past, land parcels were provided to BMRCL by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). However, with BBMP now utilising open spaces around lakes and other areas in the city for its plantation commitments, BMRCL is struggling with land availability. Officials say the agency is following best practices formulated by the Tree Expert Committee.

"To plant 20,000 saplings, we require more than 200 acres of open space. Due to the rapid urbanisation of the city, getting such land parcels within BBMP limits is getting increasingly difficult. Thus, we approached the Karnataka High Court and we were permitted to carry out plantation in Bengaluru Metropolitan Region Development Authority(BMRDA) limits. We are also utilising land from BDA, KIADB, and industrial parks. Large-scale plantation was done in BBMP's Kempegowda Layout. We are mostly eying the periphery of the city," said Dr Yathish Ullal, Deputy General Manager of the Social and Environment Management Unit, BMRCL.

## Other methods

Tree activists and environmentalists recommend roadside and Miyawaki plantations. According to Dattatreya Devare, trustee of Bangalore Environment Trust, land

recovered from encroachment is an ideal option for BMRCL's compensatory plantation.

"The option of roadside plantation should be exhausted before concluding that there is lack of space. We had also suggested the Miyawaki plantation to BMRCL due to lack of space. Moreover, the government has recovered a lot of encroached land within the city, which can be ideal for this purpose," said Devare.

However, experts say care should be taken and compensatory plantation should not be carried out at locations far removed from the site of the tree cutting.

"Carrying out compensatory plantation 45 km away from the location of felling of trees will defeat the purpose. The idea is to replenish the lost tree cover near the site from where trees were felled. However, this aspect is completely ignored not just by BMRCL, but by every agency carrying out compensatory plantation," said a city-based environmentalist.

# 'Right to health effective only if State sets up medical facilities'

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The Karnataka High Court has underscored that the Fundamental Right to Health and Medical Care is only effective when accompanied by the State's Constitutional duty to establish medical facilities. The Court initiated suo-motu proceedings after reading a news article titled "Karnataka Short of 16,500 Medical Personnel'.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice KV Aravind stated that the fundamental right to health and medical care requires the State's constitutional obligation to provide medical facilities. They emphasised that effective implementation requires adequate medical staff, infrastructure, medicine supply, and rural Primary Health Centres. The Bench further stated that the welfare State must ensure medical facilities, infrastructure, and personnel across urban, semi-urban, and rural areas.

The legal representatives included Advocates Shridhar Prabhu (Amicus Curiae) and B Vachan for the Petitioner, while AGA Niloufer Akbar represented the Respondents.

## Case Background

The news report revealed a deficit of 454 Primary Health Centres statewide and insufficient rural medical facilities. The High Court noted uneven distribution of medical staff and facilities across 30 districts. Bengaluru Urban, Belagavi, Mysuru, Tumakuru, Hassan, and Mandya districts showed 39.1 percent nursing staff shortage.

The report indicated shortages of 245 urban and 209 rural centres. It noted requirements for 1,60,000 beds under Ayushman Bharat - National Health Protection Mission. Citizens faced long travel distances for basic healthcare. The staff shortage included 723 MBBS doctors, 7,492 nurses, 1,517 lab technicians, 1,512 pharmacists, 1,752 attendants, and 3,253 Group 'D' employees.

## Court's Observations

The High Court stated that the State Government and Health Department must ensure adequate medical facilities, particularly in rural areas. It emphasised the constitutional obligation to provide healthcare infrastructure across cities, towns, and rural areas.

The Court noted that this suo motu PIL aimed to enforce the fundamental right to health and activate state authorities responsible for healthcare delivery.

**The Court issued seven directives, including**

- Establishing a three-member committee led by the Health Secretary
- Bi-annual assessment of medical staff vacancies and infrastructure needs
- Regular vacancy filling in government healthcare facilities
- Creating district-level committees under Collectors
- Six-monthly rural health centre surveys
- Developing coordination mechanisms for health schemes
- Ensuring adequate budget allocation and utilisation

# Data reveals 2 or more rape cases in city daily

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh, residing illegally in Bengaluru for six years, was found sexually assaulted and murdered at Kalkere Lake bed, Ramamurthy Nagar, on Friday. The victim, Najma, was discovered with multiple injuries.

Najma, who worked as house help and lived with her husband, Suman, a BBMP garbage segregator with legal documents, had gone missing on Thursday evening. Police received an alert on Friday morning about a body with visible injuries in a deserted area.

The Ramamurthy Nagar police, along with forensic teams, are investigating the case and awaiting an autopsy report to confirm sexual assault and the cause of death. A manhunt has been launched to apprehend the suspect.

Such incidents challenge the effectiveness of preventive measures, as these are largely designed to safeguard women from external threats, not those within their trusted circles.

## Disturbing trend

The data reveals that half of the rape cases involve accused who were known to the victim. Victims are less likely to expect harm from acquaintances, allowing perpetrators to take advantage of their trust. The emotional and social challenges of accusing someone familiar often result in delays in reporting, hindering timely action. Additionally, societal judgment frequently discourages victims from pursuing justice.

While steps like increased police patrolling, installation of CCTV cameras, and helplines have been implemented, they offer little protection against perpetrators within a victim's personal network.

## Deep-rooted issue

Activists argue that violence against women stems from men's inability to handle rejection and respect boundaries. They emphasise that women exercising their choice or expressing views does not equate to consent, yet many men wrongly presume it must favour them.

"Violence against women has long been a troubling phenomenon, often perpetrated by someone known to the victim—be it a friend, family member, or even a husband. This extends to various forms, including child sexual abuse and domestic violence. Such behaviour stems from a deeply ingrained mindset where men take women's sexuality for granted, viewing it as something meant to serve them. While new dimensions of this issue emerge, they are rooted in age-old practices that have taken deep roots in society," said Madhu Bhushan, a women rights activist.


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**I** Rajul W/O, Kiran Dhiren Chellaram R/o Old No 19/1, New No 39/2, 4th Cross, Nehrunagar Seshadripuram, Bangalore - 560020 have changed my name to Rajul Jain.

**I** Hemarajakumara A K S/o Kalegowda residing at No 102 Ganesh Enclave Apartment, Near Rachana MRP, Hejjala, Ramanagar-562109, have changed my name to Hemaraja Kumar A K for all purposes.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**Zeenat Unnissa alias Zeenat Begum** W/o Taj Pasha, 50 years, 3964, Bhangatsingh Road, Mutyalpet, Mulbagal Town and Taluk, Kolar District. **Zeenat Unnissa alias Zeenat Begum** both these names refers to be me & same as sworn before B. Nagaraja, Notary & Advocate, Mulabagal on 24-01-2025.

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# CLEAN SLATE

## Whole-body deodorants: a solution to a non-existent problem

Step into any supermarket or pharmacy, and you'll find aisles brimming with products designed to make you smell "fresh", feel "clean", or somehow achieve a level of "purity" that no human body naturally possesses.

Whole-body deodorants have joined the lineup of intimate washes, douches and steaming kits, with internet searches for these deodorants massively increasing since 2023. All promise to do what your body is already masterfully equipped to handle: keeping itself clean and functioning.

But here's the thing, your body is not unclean.

Whole-body deodorants are marketed for areas beyond the armpit, most commonly feet and intimate areas – but the premise that these areas are inherently dirty is misleading. In fact, the body is a finely tuned biological system that has been self-regulating for millennia. The notion that you need expensive products to achieve basic hygiene is a fallacy rooted in marketing, not science.

### Self-cleaning vaginas

The vagina is one of the most misunderstood parts of the body when it comes to hygiene. Despite its remarkable ability to maintain its own health through a delicate balance of pH and beneficial bacteria, an entire industry exists to sell products that disrupt this natural system.

From douches to scented wipes, these products often cause the very issues they claim to solve, such as infections or irritation.

Central to the vagina's self-cleaning process is vaginal discharge – a natural and essential function. Discharge consists of water, mucus and cells shed from the vaginal lining, which flush out bacteria, dead cells and debris.

Thanks to this continuous self-flushing mechanism, no internal cleaning, such as douching, is necessary. In fact, such interventions can disturb the vaginal microbiome, increasing the risk of bacterial vaginosis or yeast infections.

Vaginal steaming, a practice promoted by wellness influencers, claims to "cleanse" or "revitalise" the uterus and vagina. Yet there is no evidence of benefit and, in terms of the uterus, reveals a misunderstanding of anatomy. It is unnecessary at best and harmful at worst.

While the vagina takes care of its internal health, the external vulval area does require some attention. Exposed to sweat, urine and natural oils, the vulval skin benefits from gentle daily cleaning with warm water or mild soap.

### Male intimate hygiene

For men, the marketing approach differs but remains equally misleading. Products like intimate washes and deodorising sprays are presented as essential for modern grooming. Consider the rise of "ball sprays" (a genuine term) and lotions, which promise to keep the scrotum dry and odour-free.

The scrotum is more than just a protective pouch for the testes; it is also a thermoregulating organ designed to maintain an optimal temperature for sperm production. To achieve this, the scrotum is equipped with eccrine sweat glands.

These glands are small coiled structures located within the dermis of the skin. They function by releasing sweat through ducts that open directly onto the surface of the skin. This sweat evaporates, dissipating heat and helping to cool the scrotum.

Unlike apocrine sweat glands found in areas such as the armpits or groin, eccrine glands do not produce the lipid-rich secretions that can lead to body odour when broken down by bacteria, so scrotum sweat is typically odourless.

While excessive moisture can lead to issues such as fungal infections, these are often managed with breathable fabrics, regular washing and thorough drying – not specialised products.

### Feet – the unsung heroes of sweat regulation

Feet, often confined in socks and shoes, are another frequent target of whole-body deodorants and sprays. Feet are not inherently dirty, they are simply hardworking, equipped with about 250,000 sweat glands – the highest concentration of sweat glands in the body.

Like the scrotum, these are eccrine sweat glands, releasing mostly water-based sweat to help cool the feet, particularly during physical activity or in warm conditions.

Moisture from sweat also reduces friction between the skin and footwear. Additionally, eccrine sweat keeps the skin of the feet supple and prevents cracking, which might otherwise create entry points for infections.

Though sweat from the feet is odourless when trapped in moist, warm environments such as socks or shoes, bacteria on the skin break down sweat components, releasing compounds that cause odour. Prolonged moisture can also lead to fungal infections, such as athlete's foot and skin maceration, where softened skin becomes more prone to irritation or breakdown.

Managing foot sweat involves supporting the body's natural processes rather than eliminating them. Daily washing with warm water and mild soap, followed by thorough drying, is essential.

So, the bottom line is, if a company is trying to sell you the idea that your body is inherently unclean, it's likely not your hygiene that needs fixing. It's their marketing pitch.

However, if body odour persists despite daily washing, it could signal an underlying medical condition. These conditions deserve sympathetic investigation and appropriate support, not masking with overpriced products that treat only the symptom rather than the cause.

*(By Michelle Spear, University of Bristol, The Conversation)*

## MIRRORLIGHTS

## Late-night binge watching of reels linked to hypertension, reveals study

We all have a habit of scrolling through social media feeds, with short videos effortlessly grabbing our attention. And what better time to do so than at night, when we no longer have to worry about the day's stresses? This late-night scrolling may seem like a harmless habit, but a recent study has said that its implications for cardiovascular health are significant. The study published in BioMed Central reveals a troubling side effect: increased risk of hypertension linked to late-night video consumption.

The findings revealed that individuals who frequently consumed short video content before sleeping showed a significant increase in blood pressure levels.

"Screen time spent watching short videos at bedtime was found to be significantly associated with essential hypertension in young and middle-aged individuals," explains Dr Sudha Desai, Consultant Physician, Ruby Hall Clinic Pune.

**So, why is it happening?**

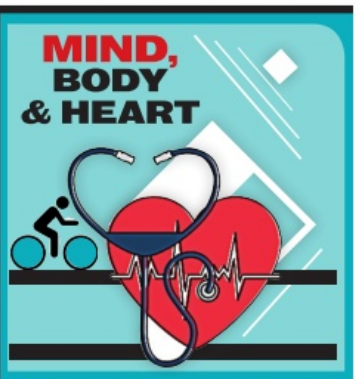
There is a significant impact of blue light on our sleep-wake cycle as it inhibits the synthesis of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep and wakefulness. Blue light exposure also contributes to sleep disturbances.

Getting less than six hours of sleep has been linked to a higher risk of high blood pressure and cognitive decline.

Excessive screen exposure close to bedtime can also increase stress and anxiety, depending on the content being watched.

Poor sleep, in turn, is associated with a higher risk of being overweight and obesity, which can further lead to hypertensive responses in the body.

The best strategies to address this problem include counseling and providing proper guidance to young people, reducing peer pressure, and motivating them to engage in physical activity, maintain a balanced diet, and ensure adequate sleep. —Femina




## All you need to know about...

*Protein BCL6*

**Helps retain muscle mass**

The recent surge in popularity of weight loss drugs like Ozempic, collectively called GLP-1s, has sparked renewed scientific interest in understanding how our bodies regulate muscle growth. In a recent study, scientists have linked the protein BCL6 to the maintenance of muscle mass and further suggested that BCL6-boosting therapeutics could help GLP-1 users retain muscle while losing fat.

**Therapeutic**

Similar therapies could also be used to treat other populations prone to muscle loss, such as older adults and patients with systemic diseases like sepsis or cancer. A new study from the Salk Institute has revealed that a protein called BCL6 is key to maintaining healthy muscle mass. The experiments showed that mice with lower levels of BCL6 had significantly reduced muscle mass and strength, but increasing BCL6 successfully reversed those losses.

**May help stop muscle loss**

The results suggest that pairing GLP-1 medications with a BCL6-boosting drug may help counteract unwanted muscle loss. Similar therapies could also be used to treat other populations prone to muscle loss, such as older adults and patients with systemic diseases like sepsis or cancer.

The findings were published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences on January 22, 2025.

"Muscle is the most abundant tissue in the human body, so its maintenance is critical to our health and quality of life," says Ronald Evans, professor and director of the Gene Expression Laboratory at Salk.

"Our study reveals how our bodies coordinate the upkeep of all this muscle with our nutrition and energy levels, and with this new insight, we can develop therapeutic interventions for patients losing muscle as a side effect of weight loss, age, or illness." Ronald added.

—ANI

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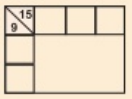
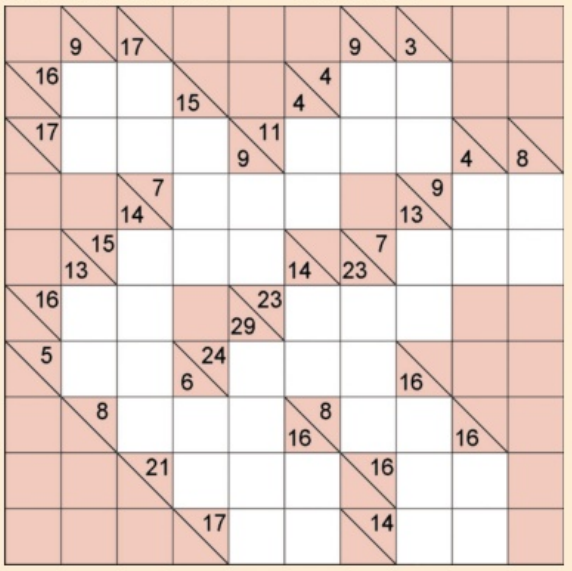
## Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

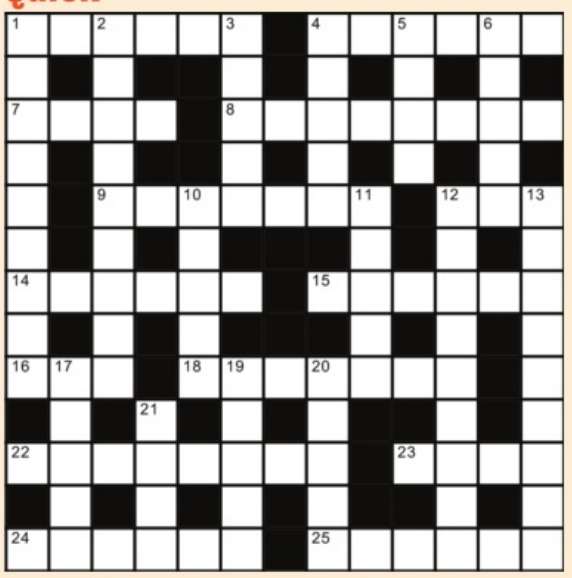



for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



## Quick



**ACROSS**

1 Merchant of Venice lawyer (6)
4 Gun part (6)
7 Eight as a prefix (4)
8 Study of wine (8)
9 Quack remedy (7)
12 Arabian or Red or Black (3)
14 Small upright piano (6)
15 The elephants for the Mysore Dussehra were trained at this camp (6)
16 Have regrets (3)
18 Love story (7)
22 An instrument for examining the ear (8)
23 Weapons for the archers (4)
24 Former German emperor (6)
25 Reputation; standing (6)

**DOWN**

1 Scholarly man (9)
2 Having a good memory (9)
3 Don't give _ __ : be least bothered (1,4)
4 African tongue (5)
5 Regulation (4)
6 2 under par (5)
10 Make a face (5)
11 Feel grief (5)
12 Patsy (9)
13 Bluish violet gems (9)
17 Extreme (5)
19 A smell (5)
20 Locales or regions (5)
21 Employs (4)

## Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

**Today's CLUE: O EQUALS Y**

TBKSD BLJ ZDV CMHTJ TBKSDN CUZD OMK, NLMHV BLJ OMK NTVVE BTMLV.

## Linemaro

I was a little bit off today, but you turned me on

## Mindchow

Friendship often ends in love; but love in friendship, never

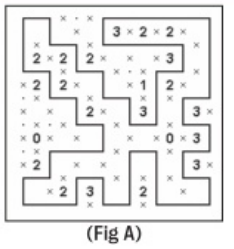
## Joke of the day

I just burned 2,000 calories. That's the last time I leave brownies in the oven while I take a nap

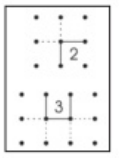
## Loop

### Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

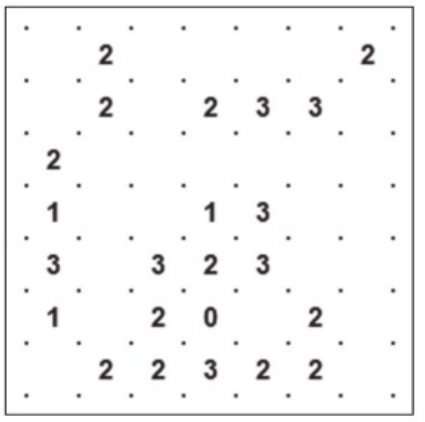


(Fig B) Not Allowed

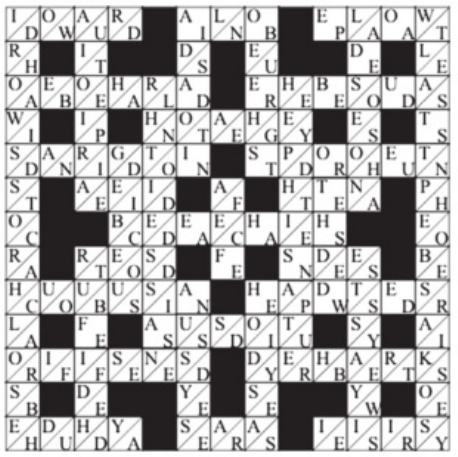
### How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



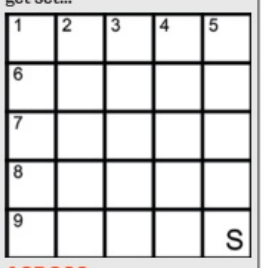
## Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

## Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...




**ACROSS**

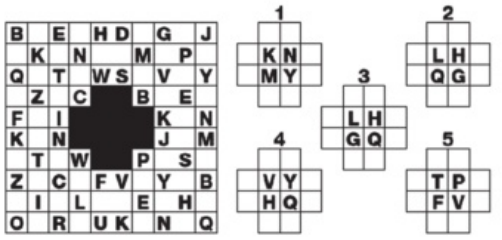
1 Shall; 6 Cilia;
7 Jaunt; 8 Aline;
9 Sand B

**DOWN**

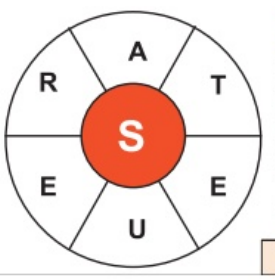
1 Jab hoi; 2 La Lau;
3 In nil; 4 Dealt;
5 Can SS

## Mensapuzzle

Which segment completes the puzzle?



## Bull's eye




How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

20 Average; 22 Good; 24 Outstanding

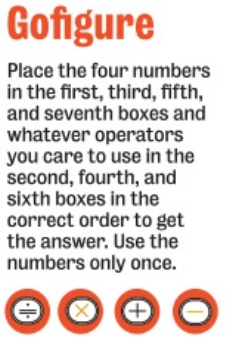
## SudokuChallenge

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 2 | 9 | | | | | | 8 | 4 |
| 6 | | 3 | | | | 2 | | 9 |
| 4 | | 6 | 9 | | 1 | 5 | | 2 |
| | | | | 6 | | | | |
| 3 | | 8 | 5 | | 7 | 4 | | 6 |
| 9 | | 7 | | | | 1 | | 8 |
| 8 | 4 | | | | | | 6 | 7 |
| | | | | 3 | | | | |

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

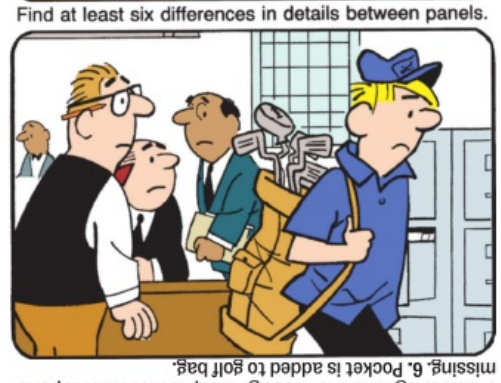
## Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.




## Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



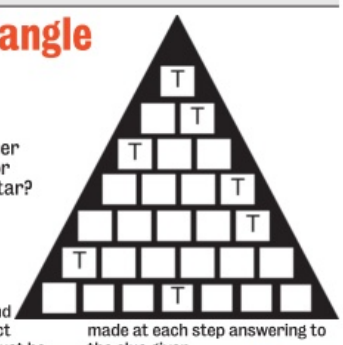
**Differences: 1.** Man's shirt collar is missing. **2.** Desk is wider. **3.** Light bulb is missing. **4.** Cap is moved. **5.** Lapel is missing. **6.** Pocket is added to golf bag.

## Riddler

What is so unusual about the sentence below? (Other than it doesn't make any sense?)
"Jackdaws love my big sphinx of quartz."

## Alpha triangle

1 Tonne, abbr.
2 Pronoun
3 Acan
4 Fuzz
5 Sparkle or glimmer
6 Covering the floor
7 Leaving at the altar?

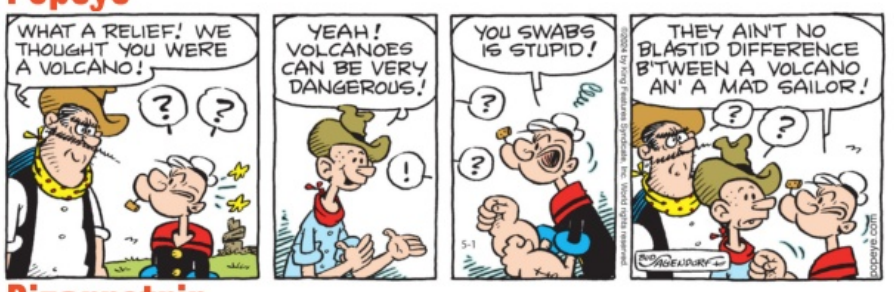


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.


DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

# COMICS

## Popeye


WHAT A RELIEF! WE THOUGHT YOU WERE A VOLCANO!
YEAH! VOLCANOES CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS!
YOU SWABS IS STUPID!
THEY AIN'T NO BLASTID DIFFERENCE B'TWEEN A VOLCANO AN' A MAD SAILOR!
popeye.com

## Bizarrotrip

BIZARRO.COM
Dist. by King Features ©2024 BIZARRO STUDIOS
You walk the dog. I just went around the world.
YO-YOS AT HOME
Wayno & Piraro 10-22-24

## Diamond Lil

## Hart of the city

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU STARTED YOUR PERIOD!! YOU SHOULD HAVE WOKEN ME UP!
IT'S OKAY! KAT WALKED ME THROUGH THE IMPORTANT STUFF.
I'M GLAD KAT WAS THERE FOR YOU, BUT I'M HERE NOW. ANY QUESTIONS?
YEAH... HOW DO I GET RID OF IT?
HEART OF THE CITY © 2024 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@OCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

## Crankshaft

HEY, PETE... WE'RE HERE AS REQUESTED TO HELP WITH THE HALLOWEEN DECORATING!
MONTONI'S PIZZA
10-22
JUST TO DOUBLE-CHECK... THE INVITE DID INCLUDE PIZZA AFTERWARDS, RIGHT?
ABSOLUTELY!
IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT COULD GET HIM TO LEAVE THE HOUSE ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS!
HALLOWEEN DECORATIONS
© 2024 Hodgepodge, Inc. Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication
BATIUK & DAVIS

## Mutts

# WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

**Aries** Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you are blessed by the Moon. Things seem to be under control, and you will find enjoyment at work. Your sharp focus and wisdom will reflect positively in your professional decisions. Past investments are likely to yield profits, enhancing your financial stability.

**Taurus** Apr 21 – May 20
The Moon's positivity brings good health and peace of mind today. You might plan a visit to a religious place with family or friends and consider making charitable donations. Property-related deals may come to fruition, and you may also consider pursuing higher education. Chanting mantras or meditating can bring additional tranquillity.

**Gemini** May 21 – Jun 21
The Moon's influence is negative today, making you prone to conspiracies. Avoid getting involved in controversies and focus on maintaining peace in your domestic life. With strong willpower and blessings from elders, you can overcome challenges. Refrain from rash driving or adventurous activities for now.

**Cancer** Jun 22 – July 23
Today brings happiness as your losses may turn into profits. Your boss might appreciate your efforts, leading to possible promotions or changes in your role. You may effectively manage your opponents and hidden enemies. Singles and couples might make important marriage decisions with support from family or friends.

**Leo** Jul 24 – Aug 23
You'll be busy at work, feeling enthusiastic and motivated. Your energy will help you speed up projects and make quick decisions, boosting your business. While exploring innovations in partnerships, avoid investments in fixed assets for the time being.

**Virgo** Aug 24 – Sep 23
The Moon's blessings enhance your performance at work today. Promotions or transfers that bring gains are on the horizon. You might even consider switching jobs. Strong relationships with seniors will benefit you, and any lingering health issues are likely to improve.

**Libra** Sep 24 – Oct 22
You may feel dull and dissatisfied today. Arrogance might affect both your personal and professional life, leaving you less confident and less creative. Focus on self-reflection and try not to let these feelings overwhelm you.

**Scorpio** Oct 23 – Nov 22
You'll feel energetic and efficient at work today, with your hard work finally paying off. This success will boost your confidence. Property-related disputes with siblings are likely to be resolved, and meeting an influential person could expand your network. Disputes with your partner may also find resolution.

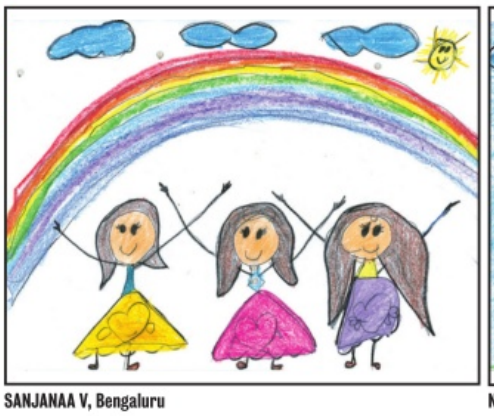
**Sagittarius** Nov 23 – Dec 22
Blessed by the Moon, you'll feel happy and polite today. With support from family, you can make important business decisions. Your excellent communication skills may help secure a significant order, boosting your business growth.

**Capricorn** Dec 23 – Jan 20
The Moon's blessings bring internal strength and joy today. You'll enjoy your work and share romantic moments with your spouse, improving domestic harmony. Planning and implementing new projects will be successful due to your perfectionism. Job seekers may find promising opportunities. Lovebirds should avoid unnecessary discussions.

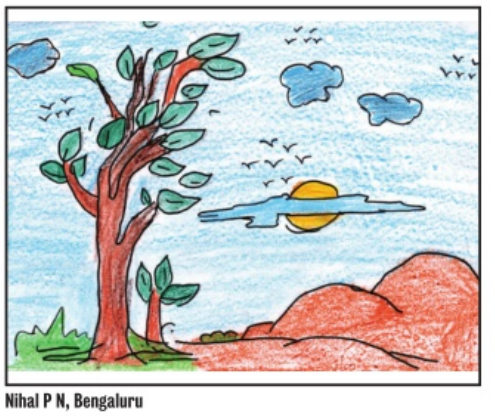
**Aquarius** Jan 21 – Feb 19
Disappointment may cloud your day. Control your arrogance to prevent losses caused by harsh words or unnecessary conflicts. Lovebirds should handle conversations carefully to avoid straining their relationship.

**Pisces** Feb 20 – Mar 20
A peaceful mind helps you plan investments that can increase liquidity in your business. Improved earnings will enhance your bank balance. Romantic moments with your spouse will boost family harmony, and singles might find a suitable match. Lovebirds could make decisions about marriage.

# KIDZONE



SANJANAA V, Bengaluru



Nihal P N, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

# SOLUTIONS

**SOLVE IN 1M**
= (9/100)^2 = 81/10000 = 0.81/100 = 0.81%

**RIDDLER**
It contains all the letters of the alphabet.

**BULL'S EYE**
aster, AUSTERE, ease, east, erase, reset, rest, reuse, ruse, rust, sate, sear, seat, seer, star, stare, steer, suet, sure, tease, teaser, terse, tsar, user

**QUOTE UNCODE**
Laugh and the world laughs with you, snore and you sleep alone.

**FAST FIVE**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H | A | L | L | S |
| I | L | I | A | C |
| J | U | N | T | A |
| A | L | I | E | N |
| B | A | N | D | S |

**STRIKE OUT**

**QUICK**

**MENSA PUZZLE**
2. Split the diagram horizontally and vertically into 4 quarters. A sequence of letters is written in each quarter, following the alphabetic order, 3 letters at a time, starting with the upper left quarter. Add 2 to the values of each letter to give the letters in the next quarter clockwise, then 3, then 4.

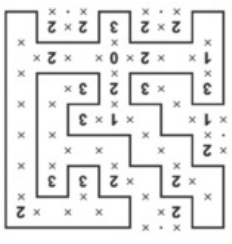
**SUDOKU**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 3 |
| 2 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 |
| 6 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 9 |
| 4 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| 5 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| 3 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 6 |
| 9 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| 8 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 7 |
| 1 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 5 |

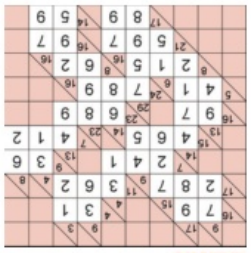
**ALPHA TRIANGLE**
T, It, Tin, Lint, Glint, Tilting, Jilting.

**GO FIGURE**
Easy
4 – 8 – 3 + 8 = 1
Medium
3 – 6 + 8 × 5 = 25
Hard
2 + 2 – 3 + 6 = 7

**LOOP**



**KAKURO**



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# WHAT IS LOVE

## Shahid speaks about learnings from his relationships, heartbreak

Bollywood star Shahid Kapoor recently opened up about the emotional struggles he has faced in relationships and the life lessons heartbreaks have taught him.

Speaking candidly during a podcast interview with Raj Shamani, Shahid delved into the feelings of inadequacy and desperation that often accompany rejection, admitting that his own emotional tendencies had, at times, hindered his relationships.

The actor described heartbreak as a humbling experience that forced him to confront uncomfortable truths about himself. He acknowledged that during periods of intense emotional pain, it's easy to question one's worth and chase after a relationship at the expense of self-respect. Over the years, Shahid has come to see these struggles as opportunities for personal growth, emphasising the importance of self-awareness in building healthy relationships.

Shahid also highlighted a significant shift in his understanding of love. He revealed that in the past, he often sought validation and comfort, a neediness that placed unnecessary pressure on his relationships. However, he has since realised that true love lies in selfless giving, rather than in expecting others to fulfill personal emotional needs. When both partners focus on giving rather than taking, he believes, relationships thrive without unnecessary strain.

Another key takeaway from his journey is the need to assess whether a relationship brings out the best in both partners. Shahid stressed that if the connection leads to feelings of entitlement or unmet expectations, it might be a sign that the dynamic is not right for either person. Additionally, he reflected on the complexity of understanding a partner fully, noting that as relationships deepen, people often discover new facets of each other, which can sometimes be mistaken for change.

On the professional front, Shahid is gearing up for the release of 'Deva,' an action thriller where he plays a determined cop. The film, directed by Rosshan Andrrews, features an ensemble cast including Pooja Hegde, Pavail Gulati, Pravessh Rana, and Kubbra Sait. —ETimes

> "Heartbreak forced me to confront uncomfortable truths about myself

## Step out in style

Bollywood power couple Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor Khan were recently spotted stepping out in style with heightened security. The couple was spotted in casual yet chic attire, with Saif donning a blue shirt, jeans, and black sunglasses, while Kareena opted for a relaxed look, accessorised with a cap. Meanwhile, the added security is a precautionary measure following the recent stabbing incident that shook the Pataudi family.

The incident occurred in the early hours of January 16 when Saif was stabbed multiple times by an intruder at his home. According to Indian Express, a week after the attack, the actor provided a statement to the Mumbai police, recounting the harrowing ordeal. Saif revealed that he and Kareena woke up to the cries of their staff nurse, Eliyamma Philip, and son, Jehangir. Upon investigating the commotion, Saif confronted the intruder, who had entered their home unlawfully.

In his attempt to hold down the attacker, Saif was stabbed multiple times, forcing him to loosen his grip. The police have since arrested Mohammad Shariful Islam Shahzad, a Bangladeshi national. —ETimes

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## Wedding album

Keethy Suresh has shared glimpses from her elegant and graceful wedding celebrations

# The name is not Bond

Actor Josh O'Connor has addressed the persistent rumours about him possibly stepping into the iconic role of James Bond, joking that if he were cast as the secret agent, he would be completely unaware of it.

The speculation surrounding O'Connor as the next 007 has been gaining momentum in recent months, but the actor himself seems far from concerned.

In an interview with Deadline, O'Connor discussed the rumours with a smile, saying, "I have no thoughts, really. The truth is that ... I think in the space of a week, I made a joke about, wouldn't it be funny if I played Bond? Then, me and Daniel Craig did an Actors on Actors, and then something else happened, and then suddenly I was James Bond. If I am Bond, I don't know about it." The actor is currently promoting 'Rebuilding', where he plays Dusty, a cowboy trying to rebuild his life after losing his ranch in the devastating Colorado wildfires.

Co-star Kali Reis, who gained recognition for her Emmy-nominated role in 'True Detective: Night Country', joked about the possibility of O'Connor playing Bond, saying, "Just as long as I can be your sidekick," as per Deadline.

While O'Connor laughs off the rumours, he is just one of many actors mentioned in connection with the coveted Bond role, which remains a topic of significant interest in Hollywood. Other actors speculated to take on the role include Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Rege-Jean Page, Sam Heughan, Tom Hardy, and Henry Cavill.

The uncertainty surrounding the future of the James Bond franchise stems from a variety of factors, including the reported creative impasse between Amazon, which acquired MGM, the studio behind Bond, for USD 6.5 billion in 2022, and the Broccoli family, who control the franchise, as per Deadline.

Daniel Craig's final appearance as Bond in 'No Time to Die' in 2021 has left the future of the franchise up in the air. —ANI

## SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

### Trailer unveiled

The team of Unlock Raghava was excited about Ashwini Puneeth Rajkumar unveiling the film's trailer on Wednesday.

Director Deepak Maduvanahalli said Ashwini had released the title of the movie a few days ago. "I am very happy to have Ashwini Puneeth Rajkumar as the chief guest for the unveiling of the trailer. The trailer was ready only in the wee hours (Wednesday)," said the director.

He said newcomers Milind and Rachel David are the lead pair in the movie. "I thank producers Manjunath Dasegowda and Girish Kumar for giving us all facilities during the shooting. We are planning to release the movie on February 7," the director said.

Milind also thanked Ashwini Puneeth Rajkumar for her support. "The movie has all elements to entertain the audiences. Sadhu Kokila has acted in many movies but his acting in Unlock Raghava is quite different," he said.

### Audio released

Bhagiratha, as per Hindu mythology, is known for perseverance and hard work. A Kannada movie based on the similar concept is titled Bhagiratha. The team of the movie organised an event to release the audio and the trailer at Renukamba Preview Theater on Tuesday. SA Chinne Gowda, SA Govindaraj, SA Srinivas and Lakshmi Govindaraj graced the function and wished good luck to the cast and crew of the movie. Shylaja Nag of D Beats released the trailer. Pradeep Verma has scored music while Vijay Prakash, Shruthi Prahlad, and Hemant Kumar are the playback singers.

Appreciating the team, Chinne Gowda said that he was happy to see the trailer. "I wish all the best to the cast and crew of the movie," he said.

Bhagiratha is Ram Janardhan's second film as a director. "I directed the movie Boy Friend 15 years ago. Bhagiratha revolves around a youth known for hard work and perseverance," said the director. S Jayaprakash plays the lead in the movie. "I am a journalist. I made my debut as an actor with the Kannada movie Jamaana. Bhagiratha conveys a message to society," he said.